

SHORE REPORT

MAX WEINBERG: E STREET DRUMMER ON THE MOVE

by Robert Santelli

E STREET BAND DRUMMER MAX WEINBERG is a busy man these days. Aside from his recording responsibilities with Bruce Springsteen and the rest of the E Street Band, Weinberg has more than one side project in motion.

Currently Weinberg is in Dallas, Tex., where he and E Street keyboards player Roy Bittan are taping a session with Bonnie Tyler to be aired on an upcoming Bob Hope tv special. Weinberg and Bittan both contributed to the success of Tyler's latest album, *Faster Than The Speed Of Light*.

In addition, Weinberg is wrapping up the final editing of his book, *The Big Beat (Conversations With Rock's Great Drummers)* due to be out in bookstores next Spring. Published by Contemporary Books of Chicago, the book consists of 14 interviews with such legendary drummers as Bernard Purdie, Jim Keltner, Hal Blaine, Ringo Starr, D.J. Fontana and Levon Helm.

Weinberg and Helm have gotten to be good friends ever since the two met at Helm's house in Woodstock, N.Y. last Winter for a surprisingly candid interview. In it Helm talks about the Band, Bob Dylan, and the intricacies of American rock 'n' roll. At the recent Band concert at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, Weinberg joined Levon, Rick Danko, Garth Hudson, Richard Manuel and the Cate Brothers onstage and sat in for one of their encore numbers.

JUNIOR SMOOTS UPDATE...

Those of you who have been wondering what has happened to Junior Smoots since his break with the Disturbers will be happy to know that the Shore's No. 1 reggae personality is alive and well and ultimately planning a trip not to Jamaica, but Africa.

Although Junior Smoots and the Disturbers played primarily reggae and ska music, there was a gradual tendency on Smoots' part to include more and more ju ju music in the band's set. Ju ju music, for the uninitiated, is essentially Nigerian pop music. It's been popularized in this country by King Sunny Ade and his African Beats.

Those of you who followed Smoots and the Disturbers know that some of their best numbers were ju ju tunes. Although Smoots has no plans to form another band in the near future, don't be surprised if he doesn't re-surface next year with an outfit that plays nothing but ju ju. Talk about a dance band!

DISTURBERS UPDATE...

Meanwhile, on the Disturbers' side of the fence, drummer Rich Stout reports that the band is still intact and looking for a lead singer to replace Junior Smoots. "We're rehearsing four nights a week and are presently auditioning singers," explains Stout.

But Stout admits that finding a lead singer who has a sufficient background in reggae hasn't exactly been an easy task. "You have to know something about the music before you can sing it well," continues Stout.

The Disturbers plan to change their repertoire of songs in addition to adding a new lead singer. "We were kind of stuck on a lot of rootsy music," says Stout. "When we begin playing again in bars and clubs, we'll be doing a bunch of new originals as well as material by bands like Steel Pulse. We want to do more challenging things than what we did when Smoots was leading the band."

Anyone interested in auditioning for the lead singer's spot in the Disturbers should call Rich Stout at (201) 493-3056.

Upcoming in the Jersey Shore Report: an interview with Norman Nardini, a look at the Brighton Bar's *Hardcore Mondays* and the First Annual Jersey Shore Report Music Awards.